4: Wagley E-5 (1939-1940) 1943
SP22 Tapirape SP22

776 Some of these demons of the forest are now "pets" of the Tapirapé, and are no longer dangerous to them. The comparatively harmless *ančánga*, in a sense domesticated by Tapirapé men, come at intervals throughout the year to live in the large central men's house. While an [535] *ančánga* is inhabiting this ceremonial house, Tapirapé men sing and [532] dance with masks representing the visiting spirit (7).

756 Knowledge of the supernatural world is gained chiefly through the 787 dream experiences of shamans or *pančé*, for among the Tapirapé shamanistic power derives from dreams and from powers revealed in them. [774] Dreams are believed to be journeys. The *iungá*, the soul, may free itself [528] from the *eté*, the body, in sleep, and move freely in time and space. Obviously anyone may dream but frequent dreaming is evidence of shamanistic power. Laymen who dream very much are afraid, for they do not belong in this supernatural world, or they believe that they should become shamans.

Campukwi, who was not a shaman, indicated this fear in telling me his dream experience. When he saw dangerous *ančánga* in his dream, he had no recourse but to run: "I am not a shaman. I was afraid. I ran. They would have killed me". Only shamans have the supernatural power to move freely in this dream-world of ghosts and demons. A shaman is never afraid in his dream travels, for ghosts are his friends and the power of a shaman grows in proportion as he fraternizes with the demonic spirits of the forest. After a dream-visit from a shaman, breeds of demonic spirits may become his familiars, obedient to his calls for aid. Turning himself into a bird or launching himself through the air in his "canoe" a half gourd, he travels to the villages of ghosts, to the houses of demonic spirits, or to such temporal places as the Brazilian settlements or Carajá villages on the Araguaya River. Then, too, time is no obstacle: in a sleep of a few minutes he may experience three or four days of dream adventure.

756 The dream experience of Ikanancowi, a powerful shaman who died 776 a few years before my visit, will illustrate these points. In his dream he 787 walked far to the shores of a large lake deep in the jungle. There he heard dogs barking and ran in the direction from which the noise came until he met several forest spirits of the breed called *manpi anká*. They

---

[777] (7) The men's masked dance cult, kept as a secret from the women, is not [532] generally found among Tupi tribes. In this case it has obviously been borrowed from [799] the Tapirapé's neighbors, the Carajá.

9: Wagley E-5 (1939) 1940 SP22 Tapirapé SP22

to hold him, he may run wild through the village destroying property and endangering people. To bring him back, smoke must be blown over him by a shaman. While he is unconscious, he dreams and travels, sometimes visiting the house of Thunder.

"I smoked much and then I smoked again. I sang. I saw one large sun and it came toward me and disappeared. I saw many small suns. They came and they left. I saw Thunder. It was small and came (to the house) in a small canoe. It was Thunder's child (a *tupã*). It wore a small headdress of parrot feathers. It had a small lip plug. I reached to pull out the lip plug but it left." [The shaman did not conquer the *tupã* and he was shot down by an arrow while he was unconscious] . . . "all was dark. I saw many suns. I travelled singing as I walked. I spent three days walking. I climbed a large mountain on the other side of the Araguaya. There it is that the sun comes up. I saw Kanawana. He was big and his body was covered with much hair. He had many red parrot feathers. There were many *tupã* and many souls of shamans. I did not talk but came back." [If he had touched Thunder's rattle he would have stayed (died), but he was properly treated with tobacco smoke and returned to consciousness.]

Through shamans and legends of culture heroes, the Tapirapé know, too, of the multitude of "spirits" (*anchánga*) which populate the unseen world. These are of two general types: true spirits, disembodied souls of deceased Tapirapé;[19] and demons or malevolent beings of many classes. Shamans are accustomed to seeing true spirits in their dreams. These generally inhabit abandoned village sites, where they re-live their earthly lives. When they die—the second death—they become frogs, deer, *paca* and doves. Thus the toad is the spirit of a chief; the dove and *paca* are spirits of men.[20] These ghosts cannot harm shamans who are accustomed to seeing them, but sometimes the spirits attack and strike down defenseless laymen.[21] They also cluster around a man's bier to carry off the soul as soon as the body is buried.

There are infinite numbers of "spirits" of the individualized demoniac class. Of these, some are "pets" which are not very dangerous, and which are represented by men in the mask dance cult.[22] Other species are very dangerous, but these are no longer seen by the layman. Formerly, these were numerous, and killed many Tapirapé, but Ware, a culture hero and powerful shaman, fought them and killed many. A man now points to the

[19] Speaking of Tupinamba, Métraux makes these same two categories of "supernatural beings" (*ayguan, agnán, ingange* and *anhanga*), *ibid.*, p. 51.

[20] Animals which have, or are, spirits can be grouped together. There are taboos to some age and sex groups, in a complicated dietary system.

[21] Dogs can see spirits. When a dog howls, Tapirapé say, "He sees *anchánga* but we can't."

[22] At one time women may have been frightened by these "dangerous" spirits, but certainly at present everything in the men's cults is known to women, and they do not even pretend to be frightened.